National Tribune.

"TO CARE FOR HIM WHO HAS BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND ORPHANS."

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JOINER'S FORD.

Exciting Memories of the Blackwater.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

A Call for Volunteers to Cross the River.

A CLOSE CALL.

The Intelligent Contraband and His Marvelous Stories.

BY COL. E. Z. C. JUDSON (NED BUNTLINE).

THE force at Suffolk, Va., held as a base for operations south into the Carolinas, or west toward Petersburg and Richmond, was a continual menace and annoyance to the Confederates during the latter part of 1862 and the next year, and they made it lively for us all along the Blackwater and Chowan, the farther banks of which they fortified and held at such points as were considered passable, with troops enough to make an attempted crossing hot work. Nineteen times I crossed that stream under fire.

One bitter night in the early Winter of '63 I was ordered to report at Headquarters in Suffolk to Gen. Peck with 20 of my best scouts at an early hour. At 9 o'clock, with a picked body of mounted riflemen from the 1st N. Y., I reported and got my orders. I was to proceed by the nearest practicable route for infantry and artillery to Joiner's Ford, on the Blackwater, observe the roads and bridges carefully as to condition, and to learn, if possible, without being discovered, the exact force at the Ford and how they were prepared to oppose a crossing. This done, to return and report speedily as possible.

I knew the country perfectly. As Chief Scout of that Department I had traversed every road and mule-path in the section, and using our spurs freely we were 20 miles away and within a mile of the river at an hour or more before midnight. Here, near a road which led from Zuni down to the old Blackwater Bridge, I halted the party, dismounted, and leaving the horses to feed on a ration of oats we had brought along, with 16 men to stand guard there and be ready for a start if we were discovered, I went forward with four men

ON A TRIP OF DISCOVERY.

We left our sabers with our horses, and armed only with our Sharp's carbines and revolvers, hurried forward as silently as we could through the dense forest in our front, following the narrow road that led to the Ford. At about a quarter of a mile distant from the river, where a mule-path or woodroad crossed the road we were on, I posted two men, with orders if anyone came in my rear to capture the man or men without noise and hold them till I returned. With the other two men I crept on as quietly as possible and as fast as I could to make my reconnoissance and get out of the neighborhood before daylight. It was a bright starlight night, and we had to move with great care.

Soon we were at the river bank, undiscovered. Across, not 70 yards distant, was a bright guard-fire, and around it 15 or 20 Confederate soldiers, some playing cards, all smoking and talking, as jolly as men unaware of danger generally are. A long earthwork with cover for at least a couple of hundred riflemen rose just back, say, 60 to 70 yards from the river bank, and the light from several campfires beyond induced the belief that there were men enough there to fully man the works. Two sentinels moved along the river bank about a hundred yards apart, in front of the earthworks.

Creeping close down to the water I discovered a skiff moored to the shore. Touching a paddle in it I found the blade wet, and knew by that that some man or men had recently crossed in the boat. Though the spot was called a "ford," it could only be used as such in the dry Summer-time, when the water was low. Now it was swimming-deep for man or horse.

Having seen all I could without peril of discovery from the front, I had just turned to rejoin my two last men, left 50 or 60 yards back, when sharp and clear from the spot where I had posted my rear-guard came two rifle-shots in quick succession, and three or four sharp yells, which I knew my men never uttered.

Quicker than thought the long-roll sounded the alarm at the earthworks, and worse than that, a second later I heard a cavalry bugle

SOUND "BOOTS AND SADDLES."

We three made some tall running about that time, and in a very short time reached the rear-guard of two, who stood over the bodies of two rebel soldiers whom they had shot down as they came in on them, with three more, on the side path. Two bags of sweet potatoes and some dead chickens showed they had been out foraging. Three rebels had run off, yelling, when the other two fell.

We had no time now for questions or consideration. To reach our horses was all we thought of just then, for we knew pursuit meant death, and it was close at hand.

As we dashed up the hill we heard the splash of water in the river, which told the enemy were crossing.

I doubt if many amateurs could make the time we did for that mile. When we got to the road where the horses stood, our men were all standing to saddle, for they had not only heard the alarm, but seen signal rockets sent up from Zuni and Blackwater Bridges, above and below us, showing that the whole Confederate line was alarmed.

When we sprang to horse it was found one horse had broken away from the guard, and we had to double up one man. I called to a man named Boyle, who had the largest horse in the party, to let Nugent, the dismounted man, get up behind him. With an oath he refused to obey. I wish I had shot the rascal down then for mutiny, for only a few months later he murdered Lieut. Dissosway, of our regiment, and deserted to the enemy.

A cocked pistol then persuaded him to let Nugent mount behind him, and away we went on our back-track, hearing plainly in our rear the clatter of the Confederate cavalry coming on at full speed.

I had come in on the Isle of Wight Courthouse road, and when I came to where that forked toward Windsor, instead of keeping that track I struck to the right along a sandy trail, which deadened the sound of our hoofs.

By that turn I saved my party. Halting to breathe the horses we heard the thunder of a large force of horsemen sweeping over a bridge on that road. They had come in from the Zuni road, and were not our immediate pursuers from the Ford, though we heard them also cross the bridge soon after.

We now pushed on as silently and fast as we could without straining our horses, and narrowly missing a party that swept down within a couple of hundred yards of us on the Blackwater Bridge road, reached Windsor and soon after our picket-line in safety. Day was just breaking when we got there.

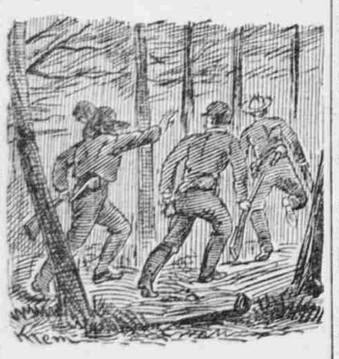
When I reported only one horse lost and no men, I received the approval of my service at Headquarters, but if we had not been discovered that night by that accidental foraging party, it would have saved us many lives and a hard time, for when soon after a large force moved over that route from Suffolk to make the crossing at Joiner's Ford we found the enemy ready for us.

BATTLE AT JOINER'S FORD.

Not long after the scout mentioned in my last paper, a sudden aggressive movement was decided on by our leaders toward Petersburg, on the south side of the James. I have mislaid my old diary, and cannot give the exact date, and must rely on memory for the facts; but as an active participant in the movement from start to finish, I think I can give a truthful account of it all.

There were so many spies in the bitterly "secesh" town of Suffolk, that every movement was known to the enemy if any signs preceded it. Therefore not an order was issued or any apparent preparation made until after dark on the very night we started. Just at twilight, when I was in my hammock, sick, and under the Surgeon's care, in my quarters, Col. Dodge, of the 19th N. Y. Mounted Rifles, came and told me if I could possibly keep my saddle I was needed to guide an expedition to the crossing at Joiner's Ford. It was to start within half an hour. Dr. Bennett, our Chief Surgeon, said I was not able; I was suffering terribly from a bleeding flux. But there was no use in trying to keep me back when told the command needed me; and only asking to have my canteen filled with the best hospital brandy, I had my negro boy George, a body servant once belonging to Henry A. Wise, get out my two horses, one of which he rode, so as to be on hand to help me, for I was too weak to get in the saddle alone. Firing up with a good dose of the brandy, I took the head of the cavalry column, which had been called out without sound of bugle, and when we moved on through the town I found full half the troops at the post under arms and in motion—infantry, artillery and cavalry all on the road.

It was a chill, drizzly night, dark as Erebus, but we moved on by the most direct route, the Rifles in the lead and Col. C. C. Dodge in the advance with the scouts. It



GETTING AWAY FROM THE RIVER.

was a hard night for me, and but for that canteen of potent old cognac I would have given out, I think, for at first I had hard work to keep in the saddle, even with help.

CROSSING THE NANSEMOND,

we struck out for the Isle of Wight Courthouse, and made as good time as we could, though halted now and then for the artillery and infantry to close up. We passed the Courthouse after midnight, and soon after reached the densely-wooded country east of the Blackwater.

The clouds now began to scatter, and by the time the morning star rose the sky was clear.

We were now within four or five miles of the ford. My canteen, from frequent calls upon its contents, was getting low, and under the excitement of approach to the enemy I grew stronger.

Suddenly, just as the advance-guard entered a small opening in the woods, I caught sight of mounted men in advance.

"Hold on, sir!" I cried to Col. Dodge; "let me see who are ahead of us before you advance!"

And I touched my horse with the spur and rode into the open, as I heard the shout:

"Halt! Who comes there?"

A stern voice, at my side, anticipated any reply from me. It was Col. Dodge, as brave a man as ever rode into fire, who shouted:

"Union men! Who are you?"

"First Pa. Cav.!" came sharp and clear, and I never felt more relieved than when I heard the answer.

It was a flanking company of that regiment sent by another road, that had thus got in ahead of us. We went on a couple of miles more and then waited for the whole command to get up. I now learned that we had two full brigades and a part of another of infantry, a full battery of Regular artillery—Howard's (L) of the 3d—and both Spear's 11th Pa. Cav. and our Mounted Rifles in that column.

Another battery—Follet's (D) of the 3d Regulars—was sent with a small force to the right to make a feint on Zuni, where the Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad crossed the river, a couple of miles above, and then we moved forward with the main force.

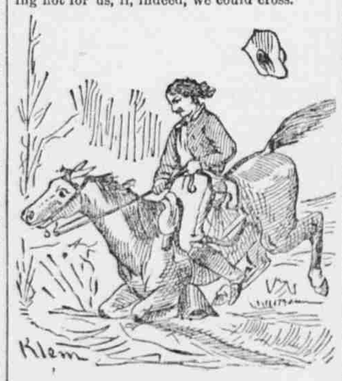
By this time I had forgotten I was sick, and I now volunteered to go on to the river with my scouts and see what signs of opposition could be found.

With a dozen men, at a gallop, I dashed toward the ford, and drove in a couple of pickets on the east side of the river, without being fired on. When I reached the rise of the hill, before going over it toward the river bank, I dismounted, and with a half dozen men crept through the timber, under cover, toward the Ford. I soon found a change in the front from my last experience there. The Confederates

HAD DONE SOME HARD WORK.

They had cut away the forest for several rods in front of the crossing, filling the river full of trees and brush, above and below. But they had left an opening for boats directly in front of their earthworks, as if for a trap. And it was one.

I crept close down, as near as I could without discovery, and found the enemy on the alert and ready to receive us. They had two guns mounted and quite a large force of men behind their works—enough to make a crossing hot for us, if, indeed, we could cross.



A DESPERATE LEAP.

I got back to the command and reported to Gens. Wessels, Foster and Corcoran (I think the latter was there) the state of preparation ahead.

A consultation was held, and it was decided to throw out a skirmish-line on the river bank to occupy the enemy while Howard got his battery into position as near as he could, and to try to shell them out, so we could put pontoons in the stream for the crossing. The pontoons were yet in the rear, but were expected up in an hour or thereabout.

The 6th Mass., 39th Ill. and 13th Ind. were deployed along the wooded river bank, and before they opened fire the sound of cannon up at the Zuni crossing told that the feint on that point had begun its work.

In a little while the action opened lively in our front. From behind the Confederate works there was a lively blaze of fire, but our skirmishers had good cover and did not suffer much. Now Capt. Howard ran his battery in on the hill in full front of the ford, and not over four or five hundred yards back. Scarcely had he opened, and exposed his position, before the sharpshooters of the enemy, in trees, over the river began to pick off his men and horses. It was a terrible fusilade, and in a few minutes he had not half a dozen horses left, and half of his men were shot down. I never saw a man so mad as he was about his horses. His animals were the best trained in the service, and they were his pride. On a march, if a halt for 20 minutes was called, they had to be unharnessed and rubbed down. He and his men might go hungry, but his horses were never allowed to miss a ration.

IN THE HOTTEST OF THE FIRE

he strode to and fro, making the air blue with his strong words.

"I can recruit men any day," he shouted, "but I never can replace my horses!"

The pontoons were now up, and if they could only be got into the river the crossing could be made and a good position be had on the other side before reinforcements could be sent from Petersburg by rail to oppose us. For the railroad, though torn up on our side, was open from Zuni to Petersburg, and thence to Richmond. But our artillery fire was partially silenced, and the enemy from their cover was making it hot for us in front all along the line, thus making it death work for an attempt to get the pontoons down.

Col. Dodge now sent for me, from the General in command, and asked if I did not think it possible, under cover of a hot fire from the skirmishers, to swim the river with a picked party of Mounted Rifles and take the earthworks by a charge in flank, which would be supported instantly by a larger force. He called for me, I presume, because I was the only one who had scouted close enough to know just where the crossing was open.

My answer was: "Give me 20 volunteers and I will try. It is like facing murder—but I'll try!"

And we did try.

Twenty men were taken from at least 50 volunteers for the "forlorn hope," and in column of fours we started down the road toward the river. The battery held its fire on our side, and as our skirmishers in that line could see us, we were safe from their fire.

The road made a deep cut in the bank, and we could ride within a few rods of the water before we could be seen from the Confederate line, though the sharpshooters in trees would see us first. Steadily we went on—trot, then a gallop, and at last just before we made a turn that would bring us under fire, the word "charge" was given.

"Go it, Uncle Ned," shouted Lieut. Ball, of the 6th Mass., jumping from behind a tree on the skirmish-line and waving his sword. Poor fellow! They were his last words. A bullet from a rebel sharpshooter went through his heart, and he sank down against the bank, still grasping his drawn sword.

A second more and we were under a withering fire. My horse staggered and went down just at the water's edge, and I looked back for my column. Down—down, man and horse, all that had come in sight of the works—there they lay!

Creeping from my fallen horse into the bushes on our side, the bullets hailing around me, I hardly know how I got back beyond the turn alive and unhurt. It was Providence—neither more nor less.

Maddened by the failure, I wanted to try again, and once more called for volunteers. Lieut. Dolan, in command of Co. A, said if he was ordered to go to "sheol," he'd go, but he'd be cussed if he would volunteer.

"Take that Dutch company and go in!" cried the Colonel.

Company B was composed mainly of German veterans.

"Ah, mine Gompany B!" shouted the Captain, who had volunteered for staff duty that day. "If dey goes dere, dey all goes to hell!"

But the order came an instant later, and while the skirmish-line poured in its hottest work and Howard sent a big volley of shrapnel over our heads, away we went again down that fatal road.

This time full half the company reached the water—the next instant we were in and swimming for the other bank, while below came the terrible yells of the 13th Ind., which, crossing on fallen trees, had gained the Confederate side, and now came up

ON A CHARGE FOR THE ENEMY'S FLANK.

Col. Dodge was among the first over, for he went in with the "Dutch company," and in a minute or two more Maj. Searle, the Confederate commander, badly wounded, surrendered all he had left to yield.

I think one Lieutenant, one Sergeant and 17 men out of near 150 defenders were all that were left alive behind the works.

The pontoons were now hurried forward and soon put down, and all made ready for crossing. But in all this excitement we had not heard the rattle of the rail cars that were rushing down from Petersburg, whence they had started when the first gun was heard in the early morning at Zuni.

And now with only one regiment of infantry over, and a part of the cavalry, we saw a sight that opened every eye which looked westward. Out from the woods about two miles away, crowding right and left for a front of over a mile, came masses of troops, the "men in gray" rushing to cover the crossing and hold the line we had commenced to break.

Our Generals saw in an instant that their force was far outnumbered, and as battery after battery of the enemy was seen galloping forward to take position and open on us, the order was given to evacuate the captured earthwork and fall back.

As the Confederates came on with a dash and night was near at hand, the pontoons were instantly destroyed and our force pushed back into a defensive position for the night.

With our few prisoners and a great many wounded men to care for, we lay that night expecting an attack in the morning. But the Confederates seemed satisfied to hold their side of the river, and as they had the force to do it with, we had no choice but to return to Suffolk.

With the capture of the earthwork my own strength gave out and I went back to quarters a very sick man, and weeks elapsed before I was fit for duty again.

The next time I rode to the Blackwater it was to scout and watch Longstreet's advance on his way to take Suffolk, which he besieged for several weeks, but did not take.

A CLOSE CALL.

That Winter at Suffolk we used to call him Granny Peck, though he was a Major-General of Volunteers. He was very nervous, and given to a strong belief in the honesty of "intelligent contrabands," who would come in, tell a mixed-up story about the advance of the "rebs" across the Blackwater, get a glass of grog, some rations, and then skip out.

On many a bitter cold and stormy night in the Winter of '62 and '63 the writer, then in the N. Y. Mounted Rifles, and commanding a picked body of scouts, has been called out to ride 15 or 20 miles to verify the statement of the "intelligent C.," or prove it, as was generally the case, a falsehood.

On one such night there was tall swearing. Rain and sleet and a northwest gale blowing fully 80 miles an hour, and yet the inevitable summons came: "Report with 10 scouts, immediately at Headquarters." It was then past midnight and our camp was over a mile from Headquarters, but within 20 minutes the squad shivered in front of the brick mansion used as Headquarters.

The "intelligent" was there with the usual story. A large force was crossing the Blackwater by "de ole bridge what was burnt down dar whar de saw-mill wuz."

I KNEW HE LIED.

He said they had "lots of big guns wid 'em." And I knew, from repeated and careful scouts, that there was not a light battery among the Confederates east of Petersburg, and no force that they would move in . . dead of Winter upon our well-intrenched position.

But I was ordered to go with my 10 men to the Blackwater, if necessary, and discover the position of the enemy. I begged permission to take the "intelligent C." along with me. That was denied. I reckon the General thought he would never make another report if he went. And perhaps he was right; that is if, as usual, we caught the I. C. in a lie.

We started, and before we got five miles, to our outside picket-line, though we rode at a gallop, we were chilled through. How would it be when we had ridden 15 more? We halted and warmed up at the picket-fire, and then mounted and rode on in the dark and pitiless storm. We passed Providence Church, and did not see a single light in the little village. It was "secesh" of the bitterest kind, and I knew, if anything was coming, they would be on the lookout there. So, being the best mounted in the party, I took the boys on a couple of miles to a dense grove of scrub pines, and sent them in there to build a fire and lay off till I came back, which I expected would be about daylight, or a little later.

And I rode on to see if there was anything east of the river. On at a lively gait I galloped till I reached the stream where poor Whelan, shot through the neck at the Blackwater Bridge, breathed his last, in a little hollow, a mile from the bridge. No sign of an enemy here in this sheltered spot, where a camp would be made if anywhere. I halted to breathe my horse, let him have a drink of the pure spring water that ran through the valley, and then looking to my girths mounted and rode on.

It was almost day. Reaching the abutments of the old bridge, I looked across at the smoldering picket-fires, where the enemy, intrenched in rifle-pits and well-sheltered tents, had kept guard all Winter, and cursed the "I. C." in my heart for the useless suffering I had gone through. Over across, not 70 yards away, I saw a jolly knot of rebs smoking around a picket-fire, and out of sheer ugliness thought I'd stir them up. So pulling out my heavy Colt revolver I let her off

RIGHT LIVELY INTO THE CROWD.

In a second there were stirring times over there. The long-roll was sounded, and worst of all for me, a cavalry bugle sounded "boots and saddles." It had only been an infantry post, and I had no idea any cavalry were there.

Reloading my pistol I fell back a little way under cover of some bushes, and watched across to see what kind of a show they would make. Day was dawning, and I soon saw the rifle-pits manned, and then I drew a long breath, for a party of 20 or 30 cavalrymen came down to the river bank on the run.

By the time they took to the water I turned and was off up the road at an easy lope. I had a horse under me that could outrun and outjump anything we had in the regiment, and I thought I would take it easy and draw my pursuers under the fire of my men up the road, who, under cover with their carbines, could do effective work before they were seen.

When I got to a sharp turn in the road just east of the spring-brook before alluded to, I could hear them coming on the run behind me, and I waited till I saw the head of the little column, and again I sent in six rapid shots before I dashed away at a keen run.

It checked them only a second, and then on they came at full speed, with the old rebel yell ringing on the icy air. They saw that one man had given them all this annoyance, and they were bound to have me if bullets and horseflesh could accomplish the work.

I let my horse out lively now, for they had rifles or carbines along, giving me startling notice thereof by some pretty close shots. If I could lead them on a couple of miles farther, I thought, my boys would hear the yells and firing, and be ready to entertain visitors. I kept ahead for about a mile, just out of range, and thought I had them where I wanted them. There were not over 20 in the squad now, and half of them ought to be unhorsed at the first fire, and then we would be about paired off for the rest of the work.

I was in a straight stretch of road with a narrow field on my left fenced by a ditch, and three or four rails on top of the embankment. A hundred yards or less the woods rose thick and dense in that direction. To my right an old cornfield a half mile wide lay open—not even a fence on that side, for a large camp had cleared every rail there.

I TOOK ALL THIS IN AT A GLANCE,

when the rebel yells, all too close in my rear, were answered in front, and I saw to my horror a full squadron of "graybacks" coming down the road in my front on the run. To wheel my horse left front for the fence and the woods and drive the spurs rowel-deep in his flanks was the work of scarce a second. And such a jump. I had no idea till I was over what a fearful leap. A wide ditch, a high bank and four rails on top of that.

The horse went clear, but fell on his knees in the plowed ground beyond, and I felt the saddle going as he rose. The girth had broken. I shoved it from under me and went into those woods bareback, with bullets just hailing around me, for both parties were firing to cut me down before I reached cover. I left saddle, holsters and two good pistols behind, but lying right down on my horse I let him slide the best he could.

And he went like a hunted deer, and that was the last I saw of the Johnnies that day. Three hours later I got to our picket-line, where I found my boys, just got in, with the belief that I was "done for." They had heard the yelling and firing, and waited as long as they dared where I had left them, and then came in to report.

When I got back to Headquarters and reported no advance of the enemy, I received the usual nod of satisfaction, and went back to my quarters, sore and tired, to think over the close call I had enjoyed.

THE RATTLE OF THE DRUM.

BY S. H. BYERS.

I've been thinking all this morning
Of the days of eighteen sixty,
And the fiercer days, ten thousandfold,
Of eighteen sixty-one;
Of the snare-drum's rattle, rattle,
As it called us out to battle,
When we heard the news from Sumter,
And rebellion had begun.

Half a million men were wanted,
Half a million must be ready,
There was little time for talking,
Or for women-folks to cry;
For the drums just kept a-drumming,
And the boys in blue kept coming,
Till it seemed as if the Nation
Were all marching out to die.

Never once we thought of money,
Nor of recompense for dying,
Pay for wounds that left us bleeding
For the twenty years to come;
Ah! the world and all that's in it
Could not pay for one short minute
Of the time we charged the ditches
To the rattle of the drum.

Thinner, thinner, grew the columns,
And the men were ever falling,
But another line of blue-coats
To their place would quickly come;
There was little thinking whether
We should all be dead together;
We were getting used to dying
To the rattle of the drum.

But the Nation, how it pitied
When it saw our limbs all bleeding!
"Sons of honor—stand before us
In the everlasting day—
Ye who saved us from dishonor,
Ye who fought our battles for us;
Ah, the debt we owe the martyrs
Heaven alone can ever pay."

* * * * *

It is seven years to-morrow
Since I sent my pension papers,
Asking for the offered bounty
For this empty sleeve of mine;
For I cannot do the mowing,
Nor the reaping nor the sowing—
Ah! I'm not the boy of twenty
That I was in fifty-nine.

They were not so slow in writing
When they called for men to battle;
There was not so much of cavil,
And such quibbling as to pay;
God! was it for this we hurried
Where the bombs and shells were buried!
Just to save some coward's taxes,
Or to make him rich to-day?

Where were *then* these men who cavil,
In the midst of storm and battle?
Did they hear the muskets rattle,
Or the cry, "To arms; they come"?
Did they bear upon banner glorious
Over field and fort victorious
In the face of blazing cannon
To the beating of the drum?

Little recked they of the pleading
Of the Nation and its children,
To the cry of "Help, oh, brothers"—
Lo! their voices were as dumb,
Fat on war's sweet circumstances—
What to them were swords or lances,
They who never heard a bugle,
Nor the rattle of a drum?

Land of lands, let us be worthy
Of the blood of yonder martyrs,
Of our heritage of glory
That has through the battle come.
Touch again the red-hot embers,
Till each patriot heart remembers
The days when men were dying
To the rattle of the drum.

A SKETCH.

With a Fighting Chance to Make Your Own Application.

ED. JOURNAL: In one of the hot months of Summer a great battle was fought. It was fought admidst waving grain and sweet-scented shrubs. The reapers had whetted their scythes. It was harvest time.

The battle lasted through woful days of horror and suspense, and from little Round Top to Cemetery Ridge was one vast field hospital.

Every blade o' grass was touched with death! The tiny cups of clover blooms, that had only known the kiss of bee and butterfly, were filled with blood those awful days, and drooped and died. Harmless leaves and herbs were tinted with a color not their own. The lark went upward carrying blood-stains toward the stars. The streams ran red. The trodden ground became a quagmire.

The little pools collected in the prints of human feet and horses' hoofs were silent admonitions of the fearful cost of human slavery—as also the price being paid for universal liberty. The trail of earthworms and insects that crawled from without those pools bore the one all-pervading hue and wrote their fateful lines o'er moss and thyme.

Night drew her curtains about the field and the stars came out. Heaven keep us from the knowledge of the sights the moon beheld along the line of Pickett's charge. Heaven save our ears from the wails and cries that rent the air that night. Heaven keep us from a knowledge of the secrets whispered afterwards upon the tainted wind that blew across those scenes of death and suffering.

Morn came and went, and came again. Still the dense gray smoke of battle hung over grass and corn, and fallow-land and wood, and over roof and church-spire in nestling Gettysburg.

And this, grave seniors, honorable Senators and Representatives, is only one touch of the brush in that gruesome picture painted on the heavens all the way from '61 to '65, yet we find you a quarter of a century afterward in the Halls of the Senate and the Chambers of the House, wrangling over a possible pension of a cent a day for the men who entered the breach, who saw the cloud and fled not, who saved unto you your present honors, the grand possibilities of a united country, and all the endearing virtues clothed in the words, "Home and Native Land."

—*Peoria Journal.*

A Champion Mean Man.

[*Jester.*]

"Johnson is a mean man."

"So they say."

"I know it. I borrowed $20 of him one day last week and returned it next day, and he was actually too mean to allow me 5 per cent. off for cash down."

Accounted For.

[*New York Sun.*]

"Is there an earthquake?" asked the Emperor of China as the ground trembled beneath his feet.

"No," said the vizier; "the hammock season is beginning in America, and the vibration is only the effect of people falling out."

He Had Been Convinced.

[*Drake's Magazine.*]

Mrs. Fangle—Do you think that animals and birds have a speech of their own?

Mr. Fangle—Certainly I do. I have heard fowl language myself.

TRACY TREMMEL.

The Varied Experiences of the Blue Jay Mess.

BOUND FOR REBELDOM.

Orders Send the Fleet to Hatteras Inlet.

LANDLUBBERS' TROUBLES.

A Severe Gale Makes a Very Exciting Trip.

BY JOHN M'ELROY,

Author of "Andersonville: a Story of Southern Prisons"; "A File of Infantrymen"; "The Red Acorn"; "Reminiscences of an Army Mule," etc.

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LETTER XX.

"OUT ON THE OCEAN SAILING."

A TUSSLE WITH OLD NEPTUNE—"WHERE THE SCATTERED WATERS RAVE, AND THE WINDS THEIR VIGILS KEEP"—A VERY SEASICK CROWD—ARRIVAL AT STORM-BEATEN HATTERAS.

PAMLICO SOUND, NEAR HATTERAS INLET, N. C., Jan. 25, 1862.

DEAREST MOTHER: "If there's anything that I am fond of it's variety," said Job to me, a little while ago, "but I never thought I'd get as many particularly lively kinds o' variety as we've had since we left Annapolis. I'd like to settle down to a spell o' steady fightin' now, for a change."

"A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE."

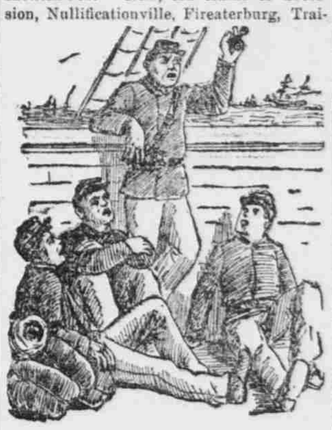
"Yis, bedad," chimed in Quin, "Oi'd rather fight all the harrued divils in purgatory than go back the way we kem."

Haven't we had a time, though, since my last letter!

That closed, if I remember aright, as we started to follow the other ships out through the gate that opened upon the broad ocean, directly into the face of a glorious full moon. What a wonderfully-bright omen it seemed, and promised all that we could hope for in the venture upon which we were embarking.

As we passed through Capes Henry and Charles we could see the ships that preceded us turning their courses directly southward.

"Whoop-ee! that means Charleston," shouted Job. "Now, old cradle of Secession, Nullificationville, Fireaterburg, Traitortown, your hash will be settled in short order. We'll retake Fort Sumter, burn down the place where they hatched the bad egg of treason, and sow its foundations with salt. The Blue Jays 'll raise the Star-Spangled Banner on the tallest pole in South Carolina, and send Secession hall home to Old Abe for a smokehouse."



After we had left the lighthouse on the Capes well behind, Ezra Grimsted came out on deck and said:

"Col. Satterlee and the Captain of the vessel have just opened their sealed orders in the cabin. They were not to be opened until we reached the open sea. We are to make directly for Hatteras Inlet, where the expedition will enter Pamlico Sound, drive out the rebels who took our forts, and occupy the coast of North Carolina."

Job looked disgusted.

"Then we are not to take either Charleston or Richmond," he said. "Them fellers we left behind on the hills around Washington 'll do the work and get all the glory. I'm mad, that's what I am."

"I don't know about that," said Ezra. "Col. Satterlee seemed pleased with the plan. We studied the coast on the map, and he pointed out that it'd put us right where we could go into Richmond from the back, and take the rebels in the rear. He thought it was fine strategy."

"Maybe it is good strategy," said Job, a little mollified, "but to my mind we're having entirely too much strategy in this war, and too little good, downright fighting. Strategy may be a very fine thing, but my idea is that the only way to lick a man is to jump on him, roughshod, and pound him till he hollers 'nuff.' That's the way to handle these rebels. They'll never give in till we've welted all the fight out o' 'em. Still, if going to North Carolina 'll take us where we can get a grip on their back hair, I'm in for it."

We discussed the news at some length, but unfortunately few of us knew much of the geography of the North Carolina coast, and I regretted that I had not provided myself with a good map of the United States, instead of the things for which I had little use.

The air grew warmer as we stood out to sea, and became quite balmy.

"Isn't this delightful?" murmured Lan, leaning back on our pile of knapsacks, in thorough enjoyment. He led off, in his sweet voice, with—

"A life on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep,
Where the scattered waters rave,
And the winds their vigils keep."

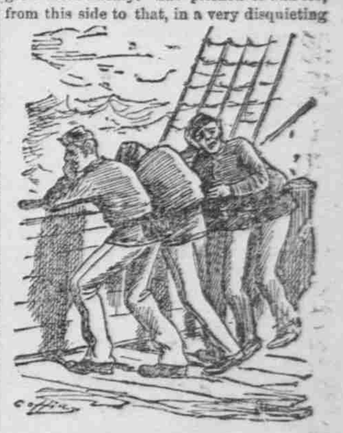
The rest of us threw our whole strength into the chorus.

"You'll git enough o' the scattered waters ravin' betwixt this an' ter-morrer night," snarled an old "barnacle-back," one of the crew. "This 's a reggler weather-breeder, an' you'll find it out afore we git to Hatterns. The waters won't be scattered; they'll all be here—'bout a million miles more 'n ye want ter see. Ye'll never hanker to have 'em ravin' agin, ye kin bet yer boots."

Alas, what a true prophet a very common, ignorant man sometimes is!

The wind began to rise. It came in gusts, with each succeeding one stronger than its predecessor.

The movements of the ship constantly grew more uneasy. She pitched to and fro, from this side to that, in a very disquieting



A WELL-EXECUTED MOVEMENT.

way. It suddenly occurred to me that I had eaten too much supper, and it was not digesting right. I said nothing, however, and I noticed that the rest of the boys were unusually quiet.

I happened to look toward Web Dallas. His face was very pale, and he seemed struggling with some inward emotion.

"My liver ain't acting' 't all right," he said presently, and with some hesitation. "I believe I'll go to my bunk an' get a strong dose of the Invigorator."

He came back on deck, bringing a bottle of the Invigorator and a large spoon.

His hand was unsteady, and he spilled some of the precious elixir on the deck, at which he groaned. Lan went to his assistance, and spilled more.

"Here, give me the spoon in my own hand," said Lan, impatiently. "Open your mouth. There, down with it."

"O, jewhillikins, you filled the spoon plum full," gurgled Web. "I told you not to. Half a spoonful's the reggler dose. It's almighty strong, and I don't know what it'll do. O, massy, it's krinking all my insides into hard knots. Lan Green, you've killed me."

He ran to the side of the vessel, leaned his head over, and vomited till I thought he would turn himself wrongside out.

"Lan, what'd you do to Web?" said Job, sternly. "I don't think that was either smart or funny."

"I wasn't trying to be smart or funny," answered Lan, with some asperity. "There's nothing wrong with his idiotic medicine. The boy's only a little seasick; that's all."

"His stomach always wuz wake," said Quin, shifting about a little uneasily. "But he oughtn't to be shuck up with this little jostling at all. Oi'll just stip over to him and hould his head."

Quin's red face was as white as Web's when he crossed the deck, and by the time he reached the side of the vessel he needed some one to hold his head quite as much as Web did.

"Howly saints!" groaned Quin, in the intervals of his retching; "won't some av ye just nail me shoesoles down so they don't be coming up through me throat."

"Well, I declare," said Job, still keeping a stiff upper lip. "Quin's been eatin' something that disagreed with him. There's nothin' wrong about this ship. I think the motion's quite pleasant. A'most like a rockin' chair. Lan, go on with your song."

"Like an eagle caged I pine,
On this dull, unchanging shore,
O, give me the smell of the flashing brine,
And the sound of the billow's roar"

piped Lan. He stopt with great suddenness before starting the chorus, and sped away as fast as his feet could carry him to join Web and Quin.

"This beats the Nation," said Job, exerting himself to look entirely comfortable, but with little success. "Who'd 'a thought that Lan would 'a been knocked under so easily. It's all nonsense, this being seasick. It's imagination. You see others sick, an' you think you've got to be, too. Just make up your mind, Tracy and Herman, that you won't be sick, and stick to it, an' you're all right. Just be determined now that you won't be sick, and we'll make those fellers ashamed o' themselves."

"You can pe just as tetermint as you tam pleaze," groaned Herman, despairingly, "put I'fe kot to go, too." His great blue eyes were full of salty tears as he reeled across the heaving deck.

"O, poys," he wailed, after his stomach had

"HOW ARE YOU GETTING ALONG, BOYS?"

emptied itself into the waves, "I shall myself durn outside in, yoost like an umprella in de vind."

This was the last straw, which gave the victory to my rebellious interior department. I could resist no longer, and made haste to form in line with the rest along the vessel's side. When I got there Job and Cad Briggs were not more than three steps behind me, and coming on the run.

Balm of Gilead, how sick I was! How sick